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GEOGRAPHICAL RECORD

AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

Meetings of February. A semi-monthly meeting of the American Geographical Society was held on Tuesday evening, February 10, at the Engineering Societies' Building, 29 West Thirty-ninth Street. President Greenough presided. The lecturer of the evening was Archdeacon Hudson Stuck of the Yukon; he addressed the Society on "A Winter Circuit of the Arctic Coast." The lecture described a trip made by Dr. Stuck along the northern coast of Alaska. On February 24 a monthly meeting of the Society was held. President Greenough presided. He submitted the names of 21 candidates for Fellowship, each of whom had been approved by the Council, and they were confirmed as Fellows of the Society. Thereupon Mr. Carl Lumholtz delivered an address entitled "Through Central Borneo: Two Years' Travel in the Land of the Head Hunters." The lecture dealt with Mr. Lumholtz's expedition of 1914-16, which he undertook instead of his projected journey to New Guinea, made impossible by the war, and as a continuation of his explorations in the same island during 1913 and 1914 (*Bull. Amer. Geogr. Soc.*, Vol. 45, 1913, p. 201; Vol. 46, 1914, pp. 442-443; Vol. 47, 1915, p. 960; and *Geogr. Rev.*, Vol. 2, 1916, pp. 378-379).

NORTH AMERICA

Does Cultivation Increase Rainfall? From the days of the early settlement of the Great Plains there was a more or less widespread belief that the breaking up of the soil by ploughing and the raising of crops over extended areas resulted in an increase in rainfall. The matter has been discussed from many different points of view, meteorological opinion being emphatically against the view that any change in rainfall has been, or can be, brought about by cultivation. In a recent discussion of this same subject by Professor J. Warren Smith (*Monthly Weather Rev.*, Dec. 1919, pp. 858-860) the conclusion is reached that cultivation does not increase the rainfall in the semi-arid region. There are well-defined sequences of increasing and decreasing annual rainfall amounts, but there has been no progressive increase or decrease during the past fifty years.

It appears to be impossible to predict the approximate precipitation for any year from past records.

R. DEC. WARD

Thunderstorms at Panama. A discussion of "Panama Thunderstorms" by H. G. Cornthwaite, Assistant Chief Hydrographer, shows that thunderstorms are of frequent occurrence in Panama during the eight rainy-season months (*Monthly Weather Rev.*, Oct. 1919, pp. 722-724). The number in the interior is greater than along either coast, and more occur in the afternoon than at night or in the early morning. The average annual number of thunderstorms is from 100 to 140, which is greater than that anywhere in the United States. The loss of life and property is, however, relatively less in Panama than in many sections of the United States. This fact is believed to be due to three conditions: (1) the numerous lightning flashes between clouds which do not reach the earth; (2) the uninhabited hilltops which serve as conductors and protect the inhabited villages; (3) the atmospheric conditions which are favorable for a ready interchange of electric currents, thus tending to prevent the accumulation of powerful electric stresses or differences of potential.

R. DEC. WARD

EUROPE

A Relief Model of Wales. The National Museum of Wales at Cardiff, under the direction of W. E. Hoyle, has undertaken the construction of a relief model of that country. The work, as far as accomplished, has been done by Wallace E. Whitehouse, who has prepared a "Descriptive Handbook," published by the Museum (1915; 62 pp., 7 pls.), in which he describes his progress in making ten of the sixty-odd 18-by-12-mile rectangular blocks, corresponding to the sheets of the colored one-inch Ordnance Survey map, necessary for the completion of the whole. The blocks are on a scale of an inch to a mile with a vertical exaggeration of 2.64 to 1. Their construction is guided by 40

east-west cardboard profiles for each block, cut according to the 100-foot contours of the map; after the profiles are set up and properly spaced they are filled in with "plasticine." The generalized relief thus developed is then revised by adding details from the maps. A negative is taken in "Keene's cement," and from this a positive of the same material is cast, the surface of which is painted with white enamel; the waters are added in blue. After a negative is taken, the plasticine of the original is used again for the next block; after the positive is cast, the negative is stored for future need. The handbook describes each block separately under such headings as geological structure, relief, drainage, and human geography; it also gives half-tone views of the ten completed blocks, which, although apparently of artificially softened modulation, nevertheless clearly express the larger land forms. It is to be hoped that the model may be carried to completion.

W. M. DAVIS

POLAR REGIONS

A Recent Eskimo Migration and Its Forerunner. In a letter recently received by the undersigned from Peter Freuchen, the former factor in charge of Knud Rasmussen's trading and scientific station Thule at North Star Bay, Wolstenholme Sound, in the Cape York district of northwestern Greenland, the announcement is made of a migration of Eskimos which is under way from this district by way of Smith Sound to Pond's Inlet in the northern part of Baffin Island. Aside from its intrinsic significance much interest attaches to this movement because it represents a return to the ancestral home, the forefathers of the present band having migrated in the inverse direction about the middle of the last century. More extended reference to this is made below.

The passage in Freuchen's letter reads:

"And now most important of all—there has been a real emigration of twelve families who have started on a trip to Baffin Island to visit the Eskimos at Pond's Inlet. Most of these emigrants are descendants of the great Etukashoosuk and his companions who immigrated here from Pond's Inlet in the fifties of the nineteenth century, reintroducing the use of the *kayak* for sea hunting, the salmon spear for ice fishing, and the caribou-antler bow-and-arrow for land hunting, and profoundly altering the culture of the natives of this district at that time. The philosophical old patriarch, Esayoo, and the restless but energetic Etukashoo, great-grandson of the old immigrant leader, who were your favorite Eskimos and loyal comrades on so many miles of the long trail, lead the band; among their followers are the big Tungwe and Ooquia, Pooadluna, Awigingwa, Satow, Touchingwa, and others. It is a remarkable and courageous little band that has been seized with the *wanderlust* and is now making its daring dash down the inhospitable coasts of Ellesmere Island.

"The party will winter on the northern shore of North Devon, so well known to Etukashoo as a great musk-ox pasture and haunt of the polar bear. While the party rests during the winter the hunters will seek a route over the glaciers of North Devon by which they can cross the island, and come down in the early spring upon Lancaster Sound by any one of the easy descents which some of the party observed when they were with Whitney years ago. Then they will cross Lancaster Sound and in a short time be at Pond's Inlet. I hope that the adventurous little party may meet no mishap, and that it may return intact to its own country with a wealth of experience and novel interest. I dread the contagious diseases that they may encounter at Pond's Inlet, from which they have been free heretofore."

Our knowledge of the mid-nineteenth century migration is mainly based on Knud Rasmussen's account of the story told him in 1903 by Merkrosuak, one of the original members of the party ("Nye Mennesker," Copenhagen, 1905, pp. 21-35; English version: "The People of the Polar North," Philadelphia, 1908, pp. 23-36). The following version is based on the story as told me by the same informant in the summer of 1914. Merkrosuak in 1914 was the sole survivor of the original party that set out from Pond's Inlet so many years before. He was an old man, very old as Eskimos go, but he still retained much of his vigor and skill and all his mental powers up to his death in September, 1915, from the result of too much food at the hands of the captain of our relief ship.

The story is as follows: About seventy years ago the Eskimos of Pond's Inlet were stirred by the stories the whalers told them of other Eskimos across the "North Water," i. e. on the Greenland side; accompanying the whalers, some of the Baffin Island Eskimos may even have met these "Arctic Highlanders," though no record of any such meeting has been left us. They knew that these Arctic Highlanders lived primitively in a land of much game and that they were a peaceful people.

The Arctic Highlanders, at the time of their discovery by Ross early in the nineteenth century (1818), believed themselves to be the only people in the world and their land

the only habitable part of the earth. Their traditions were rich in references to other people of a past time, but until the white men met them they thought themselves the only remnants of a more numerous and more widely extended race. They were sure that no one could live to the south, because in summer all their icebergs and ice-fields drifted thence—consequently the ice of centuries must be piled up beyond the southern horizon.

The lure of the North wrought upon the minds of these Baffin Islanders until it culminated in the decision of families to journey to their northern relatives and to establish themselves in that unexploited land of plenty. Accordingly in the spring of 1856 (this is the date worked out as the most probable by H. P. Steensby in his "Contributions to the Ethnology and Anthropogeography of the Polar Eskimos," *Meddelelser om Grønland*, Vol. 34, No. 7, 1910, pp. 261-264, 392 ff., and map on p. 401, showing the route, reproduced on the map in this number, p. 130), the party set out under the leadership of Etukashoosuk (the great Etukashoo) to seek their fortunes beyond the "North Water." Etukashoosuk was the grandfather of the Etukashoo who leads the party returning now to the old home on Pond's Inlet and whose *wanderlust*, daring, and experiences as an explorer have made him the guide and companion of many famous expeditions. The blood of the Etukashoo family runs restless, and it must answer "when the Red Gods call." The Baffin Island party started out westward along Lancaster Sound, hunting as it traveled, until finally it crossed the sound to the western end of North Devon. Here the party wintered successfully and contentedly, the while it sought out a further route across to Ellesmere Island. Game was plentiful and the party prospered.

Henceforth the story as it was told me by old Merkrosuak grows somewhat confused as to time and locality. The party moved slowly along the southern coast of Ellesmere Island, meeting no serious difficulty until it began the final stage of the journey from Jones Sound northward. Then difficulties multiplied: the equipment was worn and exhausted; the dogs were weak and few in number; the members of the party themselves were weary and dispirited, and game failed them. Mutiny and cannibalism entered into their experience.

A total failure of game forced them first to eat all their dogs; then the weakest and youngest of the party were selected as food for the stronger and older. Among the first selected were Merkrosuak and his younger brother. The younger brother was the first victim. Then, after he was devoured, Merkrosuak's turn came. A mere boy, he could not defend himself, but when they put out one of his eyes preliminary to his death, he broke away from the party and escaped to the hills. Here he succeeded in eluding his pursuers for several days; when finally hunger and fear drove him back to the party, he found that they had made a goodly kill of seal and no longer needed or desired him as a sacrifice or as food. He had lost his eye but had regained his right to live.

The fortunes of the party improved steadily hereafter, and they finally reached their "promised land" and the people they sought. The account of their first meeting with a Cape York Eskimo is amusing. As they came sledging down the coast of Greenland, they met a man who had lost his leg and had been provided by the whalers with a wooden leg. The Baffin Islanders concluded at once that all the people in this new land had one good leg and one wooden leg.

Though the Cape York Eskimos were struck with wonder at the accomplishments and the resourcefulness of the newcomers they received the visitors hospitably. The immigrants established themselves at Etah, and at first found no little difficulty in accustoming themselves to strange conditions and strange shores. But they were of good stock and with the help of the natives soon made themselves at home and familiarized themselves with their new circumstances. Their coming profoundly modified the whole culture of the Cape York tribe. For many generations the art of *kayak*-making had been lost; the making of bow and arrows from caribou antlers was another lost art—caribou and hare were even considered unfit for food; and the use of the salmon spear had likewise been forgotten. Thus the sources of food supply were decidedly limited, starvation ever threatened the whole tribe, and the number of its members was kept very small. In summer, before the ice went out, all the tribe repaired to the bird cliffs to live upon dovekies, murrees, gulls, and their eggs, until the ice once again lay solid along the coast and permitted sledging and ice hunting.

All this was changed with the coming of the Baffin Islanders. They revived the art of *kayak*-making and taught the natives how to hunt the sea-game in the open water. Their daring and resourcefulness served as an example to the natives, who were eager to learn. They dispelled the old idea that caribou and hare were not human food and taught the natives how to make bows and arrows and how to hunt with them. They restored the art of salmon spearing with the three-pronged spear, an implement of which the making and the use had been forgotten.

The activities of the tribe were thus greatly extended, and the struggle for existence was made much easier. The welfare and prosperity of the tribe were made materially more certain and secure, and it began growing in numbers. The influx of good new blood soon began to be felt throughout the tribe in better, stronger men and women. It was a revitalized people that the first American explorers found.

Twice in these early years the emigrants from the Baffin Island came into contact with white men. M'Clintock in 1858 met the party on the eastern coast of North Devon while on their migration ("A Narrative of the Discovery of the Fate of Sir John Franklin," London, 1859, pp. 143-144, and Carl Petersen: *Den sidste Franklin-Expedition med "Fox,"* Capt. M'Clintock, Copenhagen, 1860, pp. 92-93), and after they had reached Greenland Captain Budington, of Hall's last expedition, in 1872 met one of the women of the party (C. H. Davis, edit.: *Narrative of the North Polar Expedition, U. S. Ship Polaris, Captain Charles Francis Hall Commanding*, Washington, 1876, pp. 450-451). Thus authenticated, the Eskimo story is a genuine part of history and worthy of a prominent place in the annals of the Arctic.

Now the sequel to the story bids fair to be as fascinating and thrilling as the original epic. The direct descendants of the old Etukashoosuk are returning to their ancestral home under leadership of the old patriarch's great-grandson, Etukashoo, who is a worthy scion of the old stock, and with the counsel of Esayoo, who is himself a grandson of the old patriarch and uncle of Etukashoo. Esayoo and Etukashoo have long considered this trip. They often talked it over with me when we were companions on the long trail in 1915, and I heard them discuss it with other Eskimos at various times. What impelled them to choose this time it would be hard to say, but *wanderlust* and a desire to see their ancestral home were undoubtedly the fundamental motives. The contemporary student of Arctic geography and history will watch with interest the outcome of the pilgrimage and wonder what the effect will be, both upon the party and upon the people to whom they come.

W. ELMER EKBLOW

GEOGRAPHICAL NEWS

Organization of the American Meteorological Society. At the St. Louis meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science there was organized on December 29, 1919, the American Meteorological Society. According to its Constitution the objects of the Society are: the advancement and diffusion of the knowledge of meteorology, including climatology, and the development of its application to public health, agriculture, engineering, transportation by land and inland waterways, navigation of the air and oceans, and other forms of industry and commerce. Its officers are: President: Professor Robert DeC. Ward, Harvard University; Vice-President: Dr. W. J. Humphreys, U. S. Weather Bureau; Secretary: Dr. Charles F. Brooks, U. S. Weather Bureau; Treasurer: Mr. Robert E. Horton, Consulting Engineer, Voorheesville, N. Y. The Society has begun the publication of a monthly journal entitled *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*. The two numbers so far issued (January and February, 1920), each of 14 pages, contain a great number and variety of meteorological notes of interest. A number of committees have been appointed to promote the activities of the Society. These and their chairmen are: Research, C. F. Marvin; Meteorological Instruction, W. M. Wilson; Public Information, C. F. Talman; Membership, C. F. Brooks; Physiological Meteorology, Ellsworth Huntington; Agricultural Meteorology, J. Warren Smith; Hydrological Meteorology, R. E. Horton; Business Meteorology, A. W. Douglas; Commercial Meteorology, H. J. Cox; Marine Meteorology, J. H. Scarr; Aeronautical Meteorology, C. T. Menoher. At the St. Louis meeting, December 30-31, 1919, and in continuation thereof in New York on January 3, 1920, no less than 29 papers were read. Joint sessions were held with the American Physical Society and the Association of American Geographers, to the latter of which reference is made in this number on pp. 139-140. The annual dues of the Society are only one dollar, which includes receipt of the monthly *Bulletin*.